

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 STATE 178682

63

ORIGIN ITFE-05

INFO OCT-01 SS-15 EA-10 DHA-02 ORM-01 AID-05 HEW-06 IO-10

PM-03 DPW-01 INR-07 PA-02 PRS-01 INRE-00 SSO-00 ISO-00

/069 R

DRAFTED BY IATF: CRICHARDSON:JNH

APPROVED BY IATF: JTAFT

IATF: JTAFT

----- 117287

O 292025Z JUL 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO CIVIL COORDINATOR CAMP PENDLETON IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 178682

E.O. 11652. N/A

TAGS: SREF

SUBJECT: NEW YORK TIMES STORY

CAMP PENDLETON, CALIFORNIA, JULY 27--OFFICIALS DEALING WITH THE RESETTLEMENT OF 130,000 VIETNAMESE AND CAMBODIANS HAVE DISCOVERED IN REFUGEE CAMPS MORE THAN 300 CHILDREN WHO ARRIVED IN THIS COUNTRY UNACCOMPANIED BY THEIR PARENTS.

MOST OF THEM ARE VIETNAMESE, ACCORDING TO THOSE FAMILIAR WITH THEIR CASES. SOME WERE APPARENTLY SENT OUT WITH OTHER RELATIVES OF FRIENDS WHEN SAIGON FELL TO THE COMMUNISTS AT THE END OF APRIL. OTHERS ARE SAID TO HAVE BEEN SEPARATED FROM THEIR PARENTS AS THEY FLED.

UNLIKE THE 2,000 YOUNGSTERS, MOST OF WHOM WERE ORPHANS WHO WERE FLOWN TO THE UNITED STATES IN OPERATION BABYLIFT IN EARLY APRIL, NEARLY ALL THE UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN IN THE CAMPS APPARENTLY HAVE LIVING PARENTS WHO HAVE NOT RELEASED THEM FOR ADOPTION.

THE DISPOSITION OF THESE CHILDREN, MEMBERS OF THE PREDI-DENT'S INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE ON INDOCHINA REFUGEES ACKNOWLEDGED LAST WEEK, POSES SERIOUS LEGAL AND MORAL PROBLEMS

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 178682

LEDGED LAST WEEK, POSES SERIOUS LEGAL AND MORAL PROBLEMS

THAT HAVE YET TO BE RESOLVED.

"THEY'VE ONLY SURFACED REASONABLY LATE," SAID ELINOR GREEN, THE GROUP'S CHIEF SPOKESMAN. "AS WE GET MORE AND MORE

STATISTICS ON THE CAMPS, WE FIND THAT SOME OF THESE CHILDREN DON'T BELONG TO FAMILIES."

SHE SAID THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY AS FAR AS IT HAD EVOLVED WAS "TO DO AS MUCH RESEARCH AS POSSIBLE AS TO WHERE THEIR FAMILIES ARE" AND THEN "TO REUNITE THEM WITH THEIR FAMILIES."

"IF THEY TURN OUT TO BE CHILDREN WITH PARENTS IN VIETNAM," SHE ADDED, "THAT PRESENTS A PROBLEM THAT HAS NEVER BEEN FACED BEFORE THAT I KNOW OF. ONE CAN ONLY ASSUME THAT IF THEIR PARENTS WANTED THEM OUT THEY WOULD BE KEPT THERE."

SHE SAID THAT TO THE BEST OF HER KNOWLEDGE NEITHER THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS NOR THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES HAD BEEN ASKED TO APPROACH THE NEW GOVERNMENT IN SAIGON TO SEE IF IT COULD BE DETERMINED WHETHER THE CHILDREN'S PARENTS WANTED THEM BACK IN SOUTH VIETNAM.

HOWEVER, AN OFFICIAL AT THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE IN NEW YORK, WHO IS WORKING ON THE REPATRIATION OF ABOUT 2,400 REFUGEES WHO HAVE ASKED TO RETURN, SAID THE UNITED NATIONS WAS AWARE OF THE CHILDREN AND HAD ASKED THE INTERAGENCY GROUP NOT TO PUT ANY OF THEM UP FOR SPONSORSHIP UNTIL IT COULD BE LEARNED IF THEY HAD PARENTS IN VIETNAM WHO WANTED THEM BACK.

"SOME OF THE CHILDREN HAVE ALREADY COME TO OUR REPRESENTATIVES--ONE OR TWO--AND ASKED TO GO BACK," HE SAID, "AND THEN THEY HAVE CHANGED THEIR MINDS. BUT HOW DOES AN 11-YEAR OLD CHILD MAKE UP HIS MIND?"

HE SAID HE DID NOT THINK THE CHILDREN SHOULD BE PLACED IN ANY PERMANENT SITUATION, EXCEPT WITH CLOSE RELATIVES, UNTIL SOME SORT OF INQUIRIES COULD BE MADE.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 178682

"FRANKLY, WE DON'T HAVE ANY ANSWERS FOR THE MOMENT," HE SAID. "IT MIGHT BE GOOD NOT TO DO ANYTHING FOR THE MOMENT. WE'RE NOT IN A POSITION YET TO CHECK ON PEOPLE IN VIETNAM. WE DON'T HAVE AN OFFICE THERE YET."

THE LARGEST NUMBER OF CHILDREN WHO HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AS "UNACCOMPANIED," ABOUT 170, ARE HERE AT CAMP PENDLETON. SEVENTY-NINE ARE AT INDIANTOWN GAP, PA., 38 AT EGLIN AIR

FORCE BASE, FLA., THE OTHER POSTS WHERE REFUGEES ARE BEING HOUSED. TWENTY-EIGHT CHILDREN ARE REPORTED TO BE UNDER THE CARE OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES ON GUAM.

ALTHOUGH DIFFERENT METHODS OF CARING FOR THE CHILDREN HAVE

HERE ARE LIVING WITH RELATIVES OR FAMILIES THEY ATTACHED THEMSELVES TO DURING THE EXODUS. THEY ARE TREATED MUCH LIKE THE MORE THAN 17,000 OTHER PEOPLE STILL LIVING IN TENTS AND QUONSET HUTS ON THIS SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA MARINE BASE.

HOWEVER, 13 GIRLS AND 20 BOYS, MOSTLY BETWEEN THE AGES OF 8 AND 13, ARE BEING HOUSED DORMITORY-FASHION IN AN UN-MARKED QUADRUPLE TRAILER GUARDED BY A MILITARY POLICEMAN AND SET SOME DISTANCE FROM THE NEAREST TENTS.

THEY ARE CHILDREN WHO HAVE NO ONE TO CARE FOR THEM, AND THEY ARE BEING WATCHED OVER BY RED CROSS OFFICIALS AND COUNSELORS WITH THE AID OF BILINGUAL VIETNAMESE COUPLES FROM THE CAMP.

ALTHOUGH PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE YOUNGSTERS AT PLAY WERE PERMITTED, NO OUTSIDER IS ALLOWED TO TALK WITH THE CHILDREN OR VISIT THE DORMITORY. THIS POLICY LED ONE PERSON ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROGRAM TO COMPLAIN THAT OFFICIALS APPEARED TO BE RELUCTANT TO HAVE THE CHILDREN'S PERSONAL HISTORIES EXPLORED.

HOWEVER, THOMAS C. IRVIN, DEPUTY SENIOR CIVIL COORDINATOR FOR THE INTERAGENCY GROUP HERE, INSISTED THAT THE ONLY INTENT WAS TO SHIELD THE YOUNGSTERS FROM UNDUE PRESSURES AFTER THEIR TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 178682

LIKE OTHER OFFICIALS QUESTIONED, MR. IRVIN, WHO IS IN CHARGE OF THE EFFORTS HERE TO RESETTLE THE CHILDREN, CONCEDED THAT THERE WERE NO EASY ANSWERS.

"WE'RE STILL TRYING TO FORMULATE IDEAS ABOUT JUST HOW TO HANDLE THIS PROBLEM," HE SAID, "BECAUSE WE OBVIOUSLY COULD NOT PROCESS THE CHILDREN OUT AS UNACCOMPANIED. WE'RE NOT TALKING, EXCEPT IN VERY RARE CASES, ABOUT AN ADOPTABLE CHILD. THE FACTS ARE SO DIFFICULT TO ESTABLISH YOU'D NEVER GET A COURT TO AGREE THAT THE CHILD WAS ADOPTABLE."

HOWEVER, MR. IRVIN INDICATED SOME DOUBT ABOUT THE WISDOM OF ATTEMPTING TO SEND THE CHILDREN BACK TO VIETNAM OR EVEN OF MAKING INQUIRIES ABOUT THEIR PARENTS FOR FEAR OF BRINGING

RETRIBUTION DOWN ON THOSE WHO STAYED BEHIND.

"AS YOU CAN IMAGINE, IT'S A DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD," HE SAID.

"TO ESTABLISH THE WHEREABOUTS OR EVEN THE EXISTENCE OF THE PARENTS CAN CAUSE PROBLEMS."

MOREOVER, HE ADDED THAT THE INTERAGENCY GROUP HAD "HAD REPORTS FROM CHILDREN WHO CAME OUT WITH RELATIVES THAT THERE WERE CONSCIOUS DECISIONS BY THE PARENTS NOT TO LEAVE."

MR. IRVIN SAID THAT IN MOST CASES WHERE CHILDREN WERE WITH BLOOD RELATIVES THEY WOULD BE PROCESSED OUT AS A FAMILY. IN OTHER INSTANCES, HE SAID, EFFORTS ARE BEING MADE TO PERSUADE UNRELATED FAMILIES WITH WHOM A CHILD MAY BE STAYING TO KEEP THE YOUNGSTER WHEN THEY LEAVE THE CAMP.

HE NOTED THAT IN MANY STATES IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR SUCH FAMILIES TO APPLY FOR FOSTER HOMES STATUS AND RECEIVE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

FOR THOSE WHO CANNOT BE PLACED WITH A VIETNAMESE FAMILY, HE SAID, THE INTERAGENCY GROUP IS NEGOTIATING WITH SAN DIEGO COUNTY ON THE POSSIBILITY OF FINDING FOSTER HOMES FOR THEM.

"I GUESS THERE'S ONE THING WE NEED TO KEEP IN MIND TO KEEP UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 05 STATE 178682

THIS IN PERSPECTIVE," HE ADDED AS HE PONDERED THE ALTERNATIVES. "THERE'S NO GOVERNMENT GUIDEBOOK ON HOW TO RUN A REFUGEE PROCESSING CENTER." INGERSOLL

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT, REFUGEE CAMPS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE178682
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: CRICHARDSON:JNH
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750261-0702
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750711/aaaaajuz.tel
Line Count: 204
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN ITFE
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: hartledg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 JUL 2003 by ThomasVJ>; APPROVED <20 JAN 2004 by hartledg>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NEW YORK TIMES STORY CAMP PENDLETON, CALIFORNIA, JULY 27--OFFICIALS DEALING WITH
TAGS: SREF, VS, CB, NEW YORK TIMES
To: CIVIL COORDINATOR CAMP PENDLETON
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006